



Virtual Schools in Tennessee

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What are virtual schools?

Virtual schools are public schools that use technology to deliver a significant portion of instruction to students via the Internet in a virtual or remote setting. Virtual schools must comply with the same laws as traditional public schools on curriculum standards, class size, length of the school day and school year, regular student assessments, and teacher qualifications. School districts may manage their own virtual schools or may contract for services with nonprofit and for-profit entities. As of the 2013-14 school year, 10 virtual schools have been established in Tennessee. Of these 10 schools, nine are operated by the school districts. Tennessee Virtual Academy in Union County is operated by K-12, Inc., a for-profit company based in Herndon, Virginia. The Washington County Virtual School enrolled students in the 2015-16 school year for the first time. Putnam County's VITAL program operates differently from the other virtual schools and does not enroll full-time students.

<i>School District</i>	<i>School Name</i>	<i>Grades Served</i>	<i>Operator</i>
Bradley County	Bradley County Virtual School	3-12	District
Bristol City	Tennessee Online Virtual School	9-12	District
Hamilton County	Hamilton County Virtual School	K-12	District
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools	Metro Nashville Virtual School	1-12	District
Putnam County	VITAL: Upper Cumberland E-Learning Network	K-12	District
Robertson County	Robertson County Virtual School	7-12	District
Shelby County	Memphis Virtual School	6-12	District
Union County	Tennessee Virtual Academy	K-8	K-12, Inc.
Washington County	Washington County Virtual School	9-12	District
Wilson County	Tennessee Virtual On-Line School	K-12	District

Source: Tennessee Department of Education.

Who can attend a virtual school?

Any student who is eligible for enrollment in a Tennessee public school may enroll in a virtual school although districts have the option of charging tuition to a student who does not currently live within district borders. Students have the option of enrolling full-time or part-time. Full-time students take all of their courses online through the virtual school; part-time students take one or more courses online while enrolled in another public school. Students with special needs, including disabilities and limited English proficiency, may enroll and participate in a virtual school. Virtual schools are required to provide the services included in each special education student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Virtual schools are required to ensure their students have access to instructional materials, as well as access to technology such as a computer, printer, and Internet connection that may be necessary to participate in the program.

How are virtual schools funded?

Virtual schools are funded the same way as traditional public schools are funded. School districts can use basic education program (BEP) funds from both local and state sources to implement and operate their virtual education programs. Districts are also encouraged to apply for grants and accept donations to help fund their virtual education programs.

Sources

Tennessee Code Annotated 49-16-101, et seq., and 49-16-201, et seq.

107th Tennessee General Assembly, Public Acts, 2011, Chapter No. 492, An act relative to virtual schools

Rules of the Tennessee State Board of Education, Chapter 0520-01-03.03 (12), Minimum Requirements for the Approval of Public Schools, Administration of Schools, Public Virtual Schools, revised Aug. 2012



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